SHORT & SWEET SEO CHECKLIST

☐ **Research keywords.**
You'll use keywords across your website to help tell the search engines what your website is about. Tools like Google Keywords let you research what search terms people are most commonly using so you can ensure you tap into hot topics.

☐ **Include a clear title tag and meta-description.**
When you look at search results, title tags are the main headline links and meta-descriptions are the short paragraphs underneath them. Title tags should be 50-60 characters long, including spaces. Meta-descriptions can and should be longer – about 145-160 characters (anything longer will likely be truncated by search engines). Don't duplicate title tags as these can be penalized in search. Make your headline (<ha> tag) different from the title tag to vary the keyword phrasing of your page and increase its chances of appearing in different searches.

☐ **Add alt text to your images.**
Alt text is the description of the image, which search engines use to identify what an image is so they can index it for search results, such as in Google Images.

☐ **Include formatted headings and subheadings in all content.**
It's not enough to simply bold your headings. Search engines won't identify them as headings unless you make sure they're called out with <h1> or <h2> tags in the page's HTML. Simply use the text formatting drop-down menu when you're creating content. A good rule of thumb is to use a new heading for every 150 words, or about three paragraphs.

☐ **Update your site frequently.**
Search engines want to know that your website is active and that it will provide current and relevant information for visitors. This explains the popularity of blogs, which provide a way to keep content new and fresh. Include links to other content on your site and around the web.

☐ **List your website in directories.**
To avoid being invisible online, create listings on several online directories. They help increase your rankings by bumping up the number of backlinks to your website. While there are hundreds of online directories, it's worth doing your due diligence to get listed on the big ones, like Google, Yahoo, Bing, Yelp, YellowPages and TripAdvisor.

HOW TO MASTER LEAD GENERATION

☐ **Create a goal-oriented structure.**
Each page's goal should be very clear and easy to act on. It should state exactly what you want the user to do and provide a concise call to action button (links are less effective). Thoughtfully placed fields where users can sign up for a newsletter or promo offer are good. And pop-ups are also an excellent way to encourage engagement. Best practice is to have it fire on the 2nd or 3rd page view or after 1 solid minute on your site.

☐ **Highlight case studies and testimonials.**
Often **voters** are more likely to trust a **candidate or organization** that has been recommended to them by another **voter** than they would if the **campaign** marketed to them directly. When you've gathered testimonials, make sure not to bury them on a testimonials page. Try adding them to your rotating carousel on your homepage. Or use a site plug-in to add them to other places on all your pages so that users won't miss them.

☐ **Create useful resources your audience can download.**
Not only does this demonstrate that you're an expert who's willing to share valuable insights, but you can set up download forms for these resources and capture **voters**' details in the process, allowing you to contact them later.

☐ **Limit calls-to-action.**
In today's digital age, information overload is a serious risk to **voters** retention. Decide what action you want your audience to take on a page of your website and give them one single call-to-action – reducing distractions and increasing the chances of a click.

☐ **Convert your social media audience.**
Some brands have a strong, engaged social media audience who may never have visited the company's website. Running a promotion targeted specifically at Twitter or Facebook followers and offering them special value for being part of your social network can help convert them from followers to customers.